THE TWO PATHS IN DENTISTRY

GOING TO THE COMMUNITY
Creating preventive dental programs where Montanans live and grow
- Reduce barriers to care (finding a provider, transportation)
- Meet people where they are already accessing other services (medical visits, schools, low-income services)

EARLY FOCUS ON PREVENTION
With a foundation in oral health education
- Brushing
- Nutrition counseling
- Risk Assessment
- Fluoride
- Sealants
- Dental prophylaxis (cleaning)

WAIT UNTIL AGE 3
High-risk children will already have decay
- More restorative services
- Pain and suffering
- Greater disparities in rural and American Indian communities
- Only 23% of low-income children under the age of 3 had a dental visit in 2018.

COSTLY CARE
Dental fillings and repairs cost more than prevention
- The average filling costs over $200
- Young children with extensive decay often need sedation for dental fillings and may require a hospital visit.
- In 2018, Montana Medicaid costs were over $45 million for dental care

SAVINGS
Preventive care costs less
- For families (time, money, transportation, loss of work hours, pain)
- For Montana Medicaid
- Improves health

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